

NSC BRIEFING

17 August 1960

SINO-SOVIET RELATIONS

- I. You will recall that at Bucharest last June, the Communist parties attempted to find a formula for reconciling Moscow and Peiping.

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efforts to achieve even nominal unity at

Bucharest meetings were complete failure.

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- II. Since Bucharest meeting, Moscow has taken offensive with moves-- both within bloc and within international Communist movement--to force Chinese to accept Soviet views.

- A. Pravda and Izvestia carried long articles this past weekend affirming Soviet views that peaceful coexistence possible and that war not inevitable; Izvestia termed Peiping's contrary interpretation of Lenin "a blasphemy" and other points of Chinese position "absolutely absurd."

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- B. Moscow announced on 13 August that Khrushchev would visit North Korea in October, but made no mention of stopover in Peiping.
- C. Russian-language publication of Sino-Soviet Friendship Society issued by Chinese in Moscow "suspended" about six weeks ago.
- D. TASS has reportedly refused to handle New China News Agency releases in New Delhi, following Indian Government's closure of latter's facilities.

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G. Moscow and other bloc radio broadcasts have--not surprisingly--ignored Yugoslav and western press reports of withdrawal of Soviet technicians. We have, however, noted changes in pattern of Moscow broadcasts about China.

1. For Soviet home audience, for more than 5 weeks Moscow has not commented on Chinese affairs, but has broadcast news items on innocuous subjects such as cultural events. Since early June, Soviet home audience has not heard about ChiCom economic progress or Soviet aid--a usual staple.
2. Foreign audiences continue to hear Moscow broadcasts about China, but volume reduced.

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- III. The Chinese resumed their anti-Soviet polemics--muted since Bucharest --in a 13 August People's Daily editorial.
- A. They asserted that "modern revisionists" were spreading calumny and slander against China and were "apologists for imperialism."
 - B. The Chinese have boycotted the international congress of orient-
alists currently meeting in Moscow.
 - 1. Some 300 to 500 had been expected.
- IV. At series high-level party meetings held during June-August period, ChiComs probably made painful reassessment of their position in bloc and their relations with Asian neighbors.
- A. Leadership apparently concluded that dispute with Soviets had projected image of Chinese truculence that not only isolated Peiping in the bloc but was alarming neutralist countries.
 - B. Current foreign policy emphasis, therefore, now placed on Peiping's pursuit of peaceful coexistence.
 - 1. Chinese are publicizing ^{PROGRESS TOWARD} border settlements with Burma and Nepal as evidence of peaceful policy.
 - 2. Foreign Minister Chen Yi now enroute to visit Afghanistan.

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3. Peiping has softened its dispute with Indonesia over the re-settlement of Overseas Chinese and has professed to be making "great efforts" to settle Indian border problems.

C. We think their moves are intended more to avoid Peiping's total diplomatic isolation than to placate Soviets.

V. ChiComs have also been jolted by domestic difficulties which probably also discussed at the recent party meetings.

A. Peiping is clearly concerned about the agricultural situation.

1. Tighter controls on consumption and persistent reports of food shortages contrast startlingly with the regime's grandiose claims for food output.
2. There are growing signs that it may be preparing to allocate more resources to agriculture and to accept at least some reduction in industry's growth rate.

B. Peiping has recently hinted that "right-opportunist" critics--who include those who think China should follow Soviet experience--have not been completely silenced and appears to be reviving its rectification campaign.

VI. The differences between Moscow and Peiping are having repercussions in world Communist movement. From Moscow point of view, danger is that Peiping will use difference to challenge Soviet leadership.

A. Various Communist parties in free world, many of which have chronic left-right splits, affected by divergent views at apex of Communist movement. Left or "hard" factions borrow from Peiping's declarations, while right elements--which tend to espouse greater degree of nationalism--rely on Moscow's arguments.

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- VII. The mounting ill-feeling between Moscow and Peiping and the apparently complete failure of the Bucharest conference to close the breach raise the possibility that a Sino-Soviet break similar to (but much more important than) the Yugoslav-Soviet break of 1948 could occur.
- A. The Sino-Soviet relationship can be expected to have its ups and downs, but the present downswing is unprecedented in scope and severity.
 - B. A split would obviously cause great damage to world Communism, to the Soviet Union, and, especially, to Communist China.
 - C. We do not rule out the possibility of a split, but we think it likely that acute awareness of the cost of a split will lead the partners to make new efforts towards at least a temporary patching of differences.

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